

CALLBACK

From NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System



Issue 433

February 2016

What Would You Have Done?



The “What would you have done?” issues of *CALLBACK* offer the reader a chance to “interact” with the information given in a selection of ASRS reports. In “The First Half of the Story” you will find report excerpts describing the event up to the decision point. You may then use your own judgment to determine the possible courses of action and make a decision regarding the best way to resolve the situation.

The selected ASRS reports may not give all the information you want and you may not be experienced in the type of aircraft involved, but each incident should give you a chance to exercise your aviation decision-making skills. In “The Rest of the Story...” you will find the actions actually taken by reporters in response to each situation. Bear in mind that their decisions may not necessarily represent the best course of action. Our intent is to stimulate thought, discussion and training related to the type of incidents that were reported

The First Half of the Story

Situation #1 C172 Pilot's Report

■ After exiting Class B, I requested a descent to maintain VMC as the cloud deck was getting denser. ATC approved a VFR descent. As I began my descent, I noticed that the broken layer was quickly closing. To avoid IMC, I climbed back to 5,000 feet. I informed ATC that I was on a VFR flight plan and was not instrument rated. I flew for another five minutes and then saw that what had been a broken layer had totally closed up.

What Would You Have Done?

Situation #2 C182 Pilot's Report

■ I climbed without incident to 6,000 feet where I was in and out of the cloud tops. About fifteen minutes into the flight, I noticed that the ammeter was discharging. I could not reestablish operation of the alternator. I contacted Center. I was given vectors to [an airport], cleared to descend to 2,100 feet, and cleared for a GPS approach. While making

the procedure turn inbound, I began to experience icing, abandoned the approach, and climbed back to 6,000 feet. I requested to fly to [my original destination] where, hopefully, I would be able to do an ILS or surveillance approach. I informed Center that I would shut off all my electrical equipment to maintain as much battery power as possible. I continued to fly in the general direction of [my destination].... I turned the radio on and found that I had experienced a complete electrical failure.

What Would You Have Done?

Situation #3 B737 Captain's Report

■ During the approach we had visual contact with the airport. At about four miles the runway was in sight. There was no turbulence or rain. Tower advised that there was a microburst on Runway 27. About one mile out, we encountered moderate rain for about 15 seconds. I thought the previous aircraft had landed, so I continued as no turbulence or windshear conditions were being experienced.... I elected to leave flaps at 15 degrees in case a go-around was conducted (normal landing is 30 degrees flaps). Just as I flared for landing, we began to experience a strong crosswind from the right.

What Would You Have Done?

Situation #4 B737 Captain's Report

■ I turned off the autopilot/throttles as we intercepted LOC/ glideslope and hand flew the aircraft. I called, “Gear down, Flaps 15.” Under 170 knots, on glideslope and LOC, I called for Flaps 25. At approximately 1,500 feet and 163 knots I called, “Flaps 30, Landing checklist,” but at the same time we experienced a gust and the First Officer hesitated due to our proximity to flap limit speed. He verbalized this and I acknowledged that I was slowing the aircraft. At this time there was a bright lightning strike just north of the field and several other flashes on both sides of the aircraft. There was also a radio transmission that interrupted us.

We had 12 knots of tailwind from 1,500 feet down to 800 feet and I was completely “outside” flying the aircraft, thinking

windshear was possible and mentally prepping to execute a windshear recovery maneuver. I was focused on flying and landing on Runway 28. We started with light rain and as we approached the runway, rain increased to moderate, but the runway was in sight throughout. At approximately 400 feet AGL we got the caution, "Too low flaps," which startled us and I immediately looked at the flap indicator (at 25), then the gear (Down, three Green), and brakes (Armed, Green light).

What Would You Have Done?

The Rest of the Story...

Situation #1 C172 Pilot's Report

The Reporter's Action

■ I circled back to find VFR conditions and discovered that the broken layer behind me had also closed up. I talked with ATC to get an update for field conditions at any airport close to my route of flight. I was advised that my best bet would be [a nearby airport]... and...I received vectors toward the airport. I was in solid IMC conditions and under ATC control. Less than a mile from [the airport], while still in IMC conditions, Approach informed me that the airport was now reporting an 800-foot overcast. I...asked if there was a better alternative and then flew under ATC control...to [another airport]....

I informed ATC that I had some IFR training. I did not have my approach plates in my flight bag. Approach gave me a frequency to talk with the Controller who tracked my approach and descent. I broke out at approximately 1,400 feet and safely landed in significant crosswinds.

The weather was significantly worse than reported... and conditions worsened rapidly.

ASRS Alerts Issued in December 2015	
Subject of Alert	No. of Alerts
Aircraft or Aircraft Equipment	19
Airport Facility or Procedure	9
ATC Equipment or Procedure	7
Hazard to Flight	3
Other	1
TOTAL	39

433
 A Monthly Safety Newsletter from
 The NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System
 P.O. Box 189, Moffett Field, CA 94035-0189
<http://asrs.arc.nasa.gov>

December 2015 Report Intake	
Air Carrier/Air Taxi Pilots	5,013
General Aviation Pilots	1,032
Flight Attendants	549
Controllers	450
Military/Other	391
Dispatchers	188
Mechanics	176
TOTAL	7,799

Situation #2 C182 Pilot's Report

The Reporter's Action

■ I contacted Flight Service on my cell phone and then was given a number to contact Approach Control. The Controller informed me that I was 20 miles east of [an alternate airport] and suggested...that he could permit me to descend to 1,800 feet MSL. [The airport] was reporting a 1,800 foot overcast at that time. He gave me a vector to [the airport] and cleared me to descend to 1,800 feet. I broke out into the clear and, with the vector assistance, was able to land without incident.

Situation #3 B737 Captain's Report

The Reporter's Action

■ The aircraft wanted to drift left during rollout. As we slowed, control was regained and we taxied off the runway to the ramp. Later, another company pilot (who was waiting for takeoff) told me that the preceding and following aircraft had gone around. As mentioned, I believed the preceding aircraft had landed. In hindsight, I should have gone around and waited for better weather conditions.... This incident (although turning out OK) could have been serious.... The safer course would have been to go around. I will not hesitate performing a go-around next time.

Situation #4 B737 Captain's Report

The Reporter's Action

■ I directed the First Officer to select Flaps 30 and do the Landing check. I said, "We are not going around in this weather for that; the weather is too bad." The First Officer agreed and selected Flaps 30. The radar was showing red in all forward directions, but we did not encounter windshear. We landed normally in the touchdown zone.